

Family Division Task Force – 2006
Established June 9, 2006

I. Purpose

The purpose of establishing the Family Division Task Force - 2006 is twofold: First, to study and evaluate the Family Division's practices and procedures; second, to make recommendations to the Maine Supreme Judicial Court regarding any changes to law or rules improving the allocation of resources and/or the management of cases necessary to advance the Family Division's mission.¹ Toward this end, the Task Force will study and make recommendations regarding:

- A. The timing, frequency, and content of proceedings before Family Law Magistrates;
- B. The timing, scheduling, and process of family matters in the District Courts;
- C. The authority of Family Law Magistrates;
- D. The possible consolidation of M.R. Civ. P. 80 and the Family Division Rules; and
- E. Other related topics identified by the Task Force.

The ultimate goal of the Task Force is to recommend changes that will best serve the public's needs, to eliminate magistrate or judicial events that create unnecessary costs or delays, to promote prompt resolution of disputes, and to promote better allocation of magistrate and judicial resources.

II. Membership

The following individuals shall serve as members of the Task Force:

Hon. John Nivison, Chair
Hon. Ellen Gorman
Hon. A. Mark Horton
Hon. Andre Janelle
Magistrate Bruce Jordan
Magistrate Mary Kelly
Representative Josh Tardy, Esq.
Representative Janet Mills, Esq.
Sue Bement, Clerk, Lewiston District Court
Linda Cyr, Clerk, Fort Kent District Court
Rosemary Foster, Family Division Manager
David Abramson, Esq.
Kristin Gustafson, Esq.
Toby Hollander, Esq.
Dawn Pelletier, Esq.
Debby Willis, AAG

IV. Meetings

The Task Force will meet on a schedule established by its Chair. The Chair may also, in his discretion, establish subcommittees of Task Force members.

V. The Report

The Task Force will issue its written report and recommendations to the Supreme Judicial Court on or before November 1, 2006. The Task Force's recommendations should include drafts of any statutory and rule amendments that will be required to implement its recommendations. The Task Force may also propose an implementation plan and schedule.

¹ The Family Division of the Maine District Court was established in 1998. The Division adopted a case management process to achieve its stated mission of "providing a system of justice that is responsive to the need of families and support of their children." 4 M.R.S. §183 (2005).